



## **Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

School Board Meeting – May 5, 2024

Presented by:

Rachel Johnston ,Special Education Supervisor

# Special Education Advisory Committee



## A125A.24 Parent Advisory Councils:

“Increase the involvement of parents of children with disabilities in district policy making and decision making, school districts must have a special education advisory council that is incorporated into the district's special education system plan.”

# Membership



## SEAC Members 24-25

- Special Education Leadership: Sara Lein, Laurie Hume, Rachel Johnston
- Parent representatives: At least 1 from each building level: Elementary, Middle, High, plus ECSE and Branch Out
- Staff Representatives: At least 1 teacher or paraprofessional from each building level
- Nonpublic Staff Representative from Community of Saints
- Nonpublic Parent representative
- Principal Representative: Libby Huettl from Somerset
- School Board Representative: Morgan Steele

# Meeting Schedule 2024-2025



Date	Time	Meeting Location
Wednesday Feb 19	6:00 to 7:30 PM	Branch Out
Tuesday April 9	6:00 to 7:30 PM	Simley High School Spartan Center
Tuesday May 13	6:00 to 7:30PM	D.O. Training/Board Room

# 2024-2025 Meeting Topics



## Meeting 1- February

Special Education Overview

## Meeting 2 - April -- Dakota County SEAC

Brian Johnson - The Special Education Plan from  
birth until graduation/retirement

## Meeting 3 - May

Find Love Safely

# Special Education Overview



- 21% of our learners have IEPs
- Serve students birth through age 22
- 13 different disability categories

# Special Education Overview



- Students served elsewhere, by 917 or alternative special education placements (Metro Deaf, MSAD, etc.)
- Special Education in nonpublic schools
- Federal Settings - 1 through 4



# District 197 Specialized Programs





# Special Education Overview



## Budget and Funding

Approximately \$23 million  
of the district's \$100  
million budget



**Federal Funding**

**\$1,853,709.05**

**State Funding**

**\$17,218,680.89**

# The Special Needs Plan



<https://thespecialneedsplan.com/hello-world/>

- **Organizes planning from birth to retirement** for people with special needs using the resources available to you.
- **Clarifies common options** of what to plan, when to plan, and how to plan for a person with special needs.
- **Is an alternative** to those stacks of papers and website bookmarks on numerous topics you may be working with today. Feel more in control and aware of the entire planning process.
- **Brings order** to the special needs planning process from a parent and guardian perspective. Everything is organized and explained in terms that make sense to us.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJ1OXxT3zi8>

# The Special Needs Plan



<https://thespecialneedsplan.com/hello-world/>

## Getting Started

- **How to use this website**
- How to send Questions or Comments
- The Planning Cycle: Birth to Retirement
- Get started: 3 tools for your special needs plan
- What did I learn? (a parent's perspective)
- What do I need to plan for?
- How do I get started?
- How do I learn more?
- How do we fund Basic Needs and Supplemental Needs?
- How can ABLE and Trust funds be used?
- What are Supported Decision Making and Guardianship?
- How can I get help?

# The Special Needs Plan



<https://thespecialneedsplan.com/hello-world/>

## Benefits and Supports

- What are the common benefits and supports?
- What are the base eligibility criteria for benefits?
- What are the MN Waiver Programs and what do they provide?
- What Housing Programs are there?
- What are some ways to pay for housing?
- Is there a parent advocacy organization?
- ABLE account: why do I need it and how do I open an account?
- Where can I compare ABLE accounts by state?
- What are the MN ABLE Checking and Investment Options?
- What are the MN ABLE Investments and how have they performed over time?
- Where can I find my state's Department of Developmental Services website?

# The Special Needs Plan



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## How to Plan and Manage

- How do we prepare for benefits interviews (Social Security, SMRT, MnCHOICES)?
- How do we apply for SSI, MSA (MN), and MSA Housing Assistance (MN)?
- Do benefits have to be renewed?
- What if Social Security says SSI was overpaid?
- How do I manage all this?
- How do we manage the money?
- How do benefits and accounts work together?
- What does an example budget look like?
- What are some potential retirement income sources?
- What are some retirement planning considerations?

# Find Love Safely

<https://www.findlovesafely.com/>



**Find Love Safely**

Personalized matchmaking services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities

**GET STARTED**

# Find Love Safely

WCCO <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/find-love-safely-matchmaking-intellectual-disability/>



- Parent of 8, four with disabilities
- Dating web sites are largely unsafe for individuals with intellectual disabilities
- Inspired by Love on the Spectrum and Down for Love

# 2025-2026 Meetings



Date	Time	Meeting Location
Wednesday October 1	6:00 to 7:30	Branch Out
Wednesday December 3	6:00 to 7:30	DO Training Room
Wednesday February 4	6:00 to 7:30	TRHS Warrior Hall
Tuesday April 21	6:00 to 7:30	Simley High School Spartan Center
Wednesday May 20	6:00 to 7:30	Google Meet





# Planning for 25-26

Discussion and survey of members

- Ideas for topics
- Format of meetings



For more information about SEAC, contact:

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